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NIGERIA | Action Called for in Abduction

CSW and CSW-Nigeria have called for action in the case of four school children and their teacher who were forcefully abducted by armed men from their school in Kaduna State in August. They continue to be held in captivity despite the payment of some money for their ransom.

Ezra Bako, 17; Miracle Saitu Danjuma, 15; Favour Danjuma, 10; Happiness Odoji, 16 and their teacher, Miss Christiana Madugu, 29, were abducted on Aug. 24 from Prince Academy School in Damba-Kasanya, Chikun Local Government Area (LGA), Kaduna State, where they had gathered to write their Junior Secondary School (JSS) examinations.

The rural school, situated east of Kaduna city, was attacked at around 7:30 a.m. on Aug. 24 by gunmen who rode into the village on motorcycles, shooting sporadically. They abducted the teacher and the four students after killing a young man named Benjamin Auta, whose house was close to the school. They also burnt down the community Baptist Church as they left the village.

Over a month after their abduction, all four children and their teacher remain in captivity. The kidnappers have allegedly refused to release them despite the payment of some ransom money by family members.

CSW-Nigeria's Chief Operating Officer Rev. Yunusa Sabo Nmadu said, "The fact that these children and their teacher have been held in inhumane conditions since August and despite payments by their families underlines the urgent need for the Kaduna state government and the security agencies to deploy all resources and manpower to expedite their release. Their continuing captivity in such appalling circumstances is a sad indictment of the failure of the authorities to protect the most vulnerable in society. These abductions also underline the vital need for those in authority to create a safe educational environment for children in order to ensure the right to educational for all, in line and Nigeria's obligations under national, regional and international law."